bio-technology, intormation technology and infrastructure development.

Morocco

The Prime Minister held detailed discussions with King Hasan and Prime Minister Abderrahmane EI Youssoufi of Morocco. Views were exchanged on important global and regional issues, and on ways and means to further expand and diversify bilateral cooperation. The Discussions revealed similarity of approach on most issues. Morocco also expressed understanding of our concerns. During the visit, a Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement, a Tourism Cooperation Agreement, and an Agreement between Press Trust of India (PTI) and Maghreb Arab Presse (MAP) for mutual professional cooperation, were signed. Visit of Indian delegation to Beijing

999. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-items published in The Hindustan Times dated the 16th February, 1999 captioned "Tyrnaround in Chinese attitude towards India."

(b) whether any Indian Delegation is likely to visit Beijing to discuss the normalisation process including the modalities of holding the meeting of Joint Working of Indo-China Group (11th Session) towards the end of this month, proposed to be held in China at the "invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister,
and;

(c) if so, what is the reaction of Government to Chinese invitation?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Indian and China held Foreign Office consultations in Beijing on 25-26 February 1999. We have proposed that the Joint Working Group on the boundary question be convened at an early date.

Issue of Passports to the Applicants from Punjab

1000. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passports issued to the applicants from Punjab during 1997-98 including those renewed;

(b) the countries where the Punjabis normally seek to go;

(c) the number of Punjabis who went abroad as tourists and those who emigrated permanently during 1997-98; and

(d) the number of Punjabi tourists who returned to India in 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) Details of the number of passports issued and renewed by the applicants from Punjab are as follows:

Year	Passport Issued	Passport Renewed
1997	1,50,559	5,574
1998	1,62,490	4,112

(b) to (d) Punjabis visit almost all the countries. No country-wise record of Punjabis specifically going abroad as tourists, emigrating permanently, and returning to India, is maintained by the Government.

Opinion of G-15 Countries about India's Nuclear Test

1001. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether G-15 Summit was recently held; if so, the details of outcome thereof;

(b) what has been the opinion of member countries about India's last year's nuclear blast; and